

**REMARKS**

In an Office Action dated February 7, 2005, the Examiner required restriction to one of five groups of claims: claim Group I, consisting of claims 1-9 and 77-96; claim Group II, consisting of claims 10-55 and 97-127; claim Group III, consisting of claims 56-64 and 71-76; claim Group IV, consisting of claims 65-70; and claim group V, consisting of claims 128-140.

Applicants respectfully partially traverse the restriction requirement, and provisionally elect to prosecute claim Group II, which the Examiner identified as consisting of claims 10-55 and 97-127.

Applicants do not challenge the Examiner's ruling that multiple inventions are claimed herein, but respectfully submit that the grouping of claims is erroneous.

Claims 91-96 recite a method of operating a machine having multiple parts, in which one of the parts has a digital protection mechanism. Although this digital protection mechanism is, in the preferred embodiment, the digital protection mechanism claimed in claims 1 or 86, the method of claims 91-96 involves verifying the identity or authenticity of the part using a verification method, which would appear to be more properly grouped in claim Group II. Alternatively, applicants note that claims 77-85 recite a machine having multiple replaceable parts, at least one part having a digital protection mechanism, the machine having a controller which verifies information concerning the first part, and as a combination claims 77-85 would appear to belong to a separate claim group which is neither claim Group I nor claim Group II. and in this case claims 91-96 might also be includible in the separate claim group.


Claims 97-105 recite a personal identity document having a digital protection mechanism, and would appear to properly be grouped in claim Group I.

Because applicants do not contest that the claims in claim groups III, IV and V recite inventions separate from elected claim group II, applicants have indicated that the claims in claim groups III, IV and V are withdrawn from consideration as directed to non-elected inventions. Pending a final ruling on the grouping of claims in groups I and II, applicants have not identified any of these claims as withdrawn.

No action has been received on the merits. Applicants believe the claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request examination and allowance of all claims. In addition, the Examiner is encouraged to contact applicants' attorney by telephone if there are outstanding issues left to be resolved to place this case in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID O. LEWIS, et al.

By: 

Roy W. Truelson  
Registration No. 34,265

Telephone: (507) 289-6256